

### *Sector Bargaining*

and I am today officially designating these two days as the last two opposition days for the present supply period.

[*English*]

**Mr. Baker (Nepean-Carleton):** Mr. Speaker, there have been consultations among the three House leaders. That is agreeable and I thank the hon. gentleman and my colleague, the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

**Mr. Knowles:** Mr. Speaker, there seems to have been a bit of a misunderstanding, but we have straightened it out and what has now been proposed is agreeable to the three of us.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's Order Paper, namely private bills, notices of motions (papers) and public bills. As there are no private bills under this heading in the Order Paper, the House will proceed to the consideration of notices of motions (papers).

[*English*]

Does the House agree to stand all items under the heading notices of motions (papers)?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

[*English*]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Shall all orders preceding No. 39 stand by unanimous consent?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

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## SECTOR BARGAINING ACT

### AMENDMENT RESPECTING UNION BARGAINING

**Mr. Otto Jelinek (Halton)** moved that Bill C-239, to amend the Public Service Staff Relations Act and the Canada Labour Code to provide for the establishment of sector bargaining, be read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee on Labour, Manpower and Immigration.

He said: Mr. Speaker, I will explain the purposes of the bill by quoting directly from its explanatory note:

The purpose of this bill is to require union groups in a single public service sector to bargain with the Treasury Board simultaneously, and to negotiate contracts which would run for three years and expire at the same time. This would assure the taxpaying public that each essential public service sector would be strike free, except for the possibility of a walkout every three years.

The reason for the bill and its passage is very simple. It is the growing number of strikes to which Canada and Canadians have been subjected, particularly over the last five to six years. According to the International Labour Organization in

Geneva, the countries with the highest number of man-hours lost in a five-year average are as follows. The country with the largest number of man-days lost as a result of strikes and walkouts is Canada, followed very closely, of course, by Italy. I will not dwell on them but the other statistics show that the number of public sector strikes in Canada in the last five years was 1,213, 229 in 1980 alone, affecting 717,853 employees. The number of person-days lost as a result of strikes in the last five years was 10,060,030. And we wonder why our productivity goes down year after year, affecting the economy and all operations, from the small businessman to our over-all economy!

Before hon. members opposite prepare themselves to talk this motion out, to speak against it, I would like to bring to their attention, in as non-partisan a way as I possibly can, in a sort of chronological order, the tremendous amount of support from all walks of life, all factions, including labour, management and government, in support of sector bargaining.

I go back to 1973 when the Liberal government commissioned the Finkelman report to look into labour relations. The report, released in 1974, strongly recommended sector bargaining. The then minister of labour, now Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (Mr. Munro), presented a memorandum to cabinet on the subject of labour relations in Canada which I have here. It is marked "Confidential", but I will quote it because it is very pertinent to the bill before us. It reads in part:

Some of the problems are of a structural nature in that there are too many bargaining points, too many bargaining agents and unions. The result, as any holiday traveller in Canada knows, is something as exciting as the Olympic lottery. As he embarks on his holiday, confident that the airline pilots are working and that the machinists are also on the job, there just may happen to be a walkout of ticket clerks and other personnel. And even if all of these private sector employees are on the job, the trip could still be placed in jeopardy by collective action taken by air traffic controllers, technicians, airport electricians or firefighters. There are similar difficulties in the movement of grain, with risk of its steady flow being halted, if in the long stream handling the commodity, there is labour peace on the dockside but not on the ships or the waterways.

It is clear that the system today lacks coherence and has a great potential for conflict.

The same can be said for the Post Office which has no less than four unions. One day the sorting clerks can go on strike and shut down postal delivery, and when that dispute is solved, the next day a second union could go on strike, as it has in the past, and shut down the postal service. So all of these essential public service sectors with more than one union are clearly affected by this measure. For example, last year alone eight firemen closed down Toronto International Airport. I think the time has come for Parliament to make the necessary changes to make it impossible for eight firemen to close down Toronto International Airport.

In any event, the cabinet memorandum goes on to say:

I am proposing, therefore, the establishment of the Canada Labour Relations Council as a mechanism that will go beyond one shot, crisis or ritual consultation.

Our own objectives for the council would be:

an alteration of bargaining structures so as to reduce the number of bargaining points,